

Message Text

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17

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 051000Z APR 76
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1648
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 4426

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR EG US
SUBJ: EGYPTIAN-SOVIET DIPLOMATIC HIGH JINKS -- OR WHEN IS A
STATEMENT TOO HOT TO HANDLE

REF: CAIRO 4412

1. RECENT SOVIET "STATEMENT" TO GOE WAS CLEARLY
TOO HOT TO HANDLE. IT HAS RESULTED IN SOME AMUSING
DIPLOMATIC HIGH JINKS ON THE PART OF THE EGYPTIANS
AND THE SOVIETS.
2. VP MUBAREK TOLD ME HE REFUSED TO ACCEPT
THE STATEMENT WHEN SOVIET AMBASSADOR POLYAKOV TRIED TO
PRESENT IT TO HIM (CAIRO 4297). HE APPARENTLY
CLAIMED IT WAS NOT A PROPER COMMUNICATION BETWEEN
GOVERNMENTS. UNFORTUNATELY, HE APPARENTLY NEGLECTED
TO NOTIFY MFA.
3. SOVIET EMBASSY OFFICIAL APPEARED LATER THAT DAY
AT OFFICE OF CHIEF OF PROTOCOL, SAID HAMZA, CLAIMING
VP HAS ASKED THAT STATEMENT BE DELIVERED TO THE MFA.
UNAWARE OF THE VP'S MEETING WITH POLYAKOV, HAMZA
ACCEPTED IT AS A ROUTINE MATTER. NOT UNTIL LATER IN
DAY, WHEN HAMZA INFORMED MINSTATE MUHAMMED RIAD
OF STATEMENT, DID HE REALIZE SOVIET COMMUNICATION WAS
MORE THAN ROUTINE.

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AND NOT UNTIL STILL LATER DID HE LEARN IT HAD ALREADY BEEN

REJECTED BY VP.

4. ON INSTRUCTIONS, HAMZA SUMMONED POLYAKOV FOLLOWING DAY TO GIVE BACK THE MESSAGE. POLYAKOV REFUSED TO ACCEPT IT. A DAY LATER, HAMZA CALLED SOVIET COUNSELOR AKOPOV AND TRIED TO RETURN IT TO HIM. AKOPOV, TOO, REFUSED TO TAKE IT BACK.

5. FINALLY, AN MFA MESSENGER WAS SENT TO THE SOVIET EMBASSY WITH INSTRUCTIONS TO RETURN THE STATEMENT. AGAIN NO ONE IN SOVIET EMBASSY WOULD RECEIVE IT. HENCE, MFA MESSENGER WAS TELEPHONICALLY INSTRUCTED TO DROP IT ON A DESK OR, IF NECESSARY, ON THE FLOOR OF THE SOVIET RECEPTION ROOM. HIS EFFORTS TO GET SOMEONE TO TAKE IT HAVING BEEN FRUITLESS, THE MESSENGER DROPPED THE ENVELOPE CONTAINING THE STATEMENT AND RUSHED OUT BEFORE IT COULD BE FORCED BACK ON HIM.

6. THUS, THE SOVIETS CAN CONTEND THE STATEMENT WAS PROPERLY DELIVERED; EGYPTIANS, ON THEIR PART, EQUALLY STOUTLY INSIST MESSAGE WAS IMPROPERLY DELIVERED AND RETURNED. DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY IS CHORTLING.
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